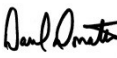




## Town of Palm Beach Fire-Rescue



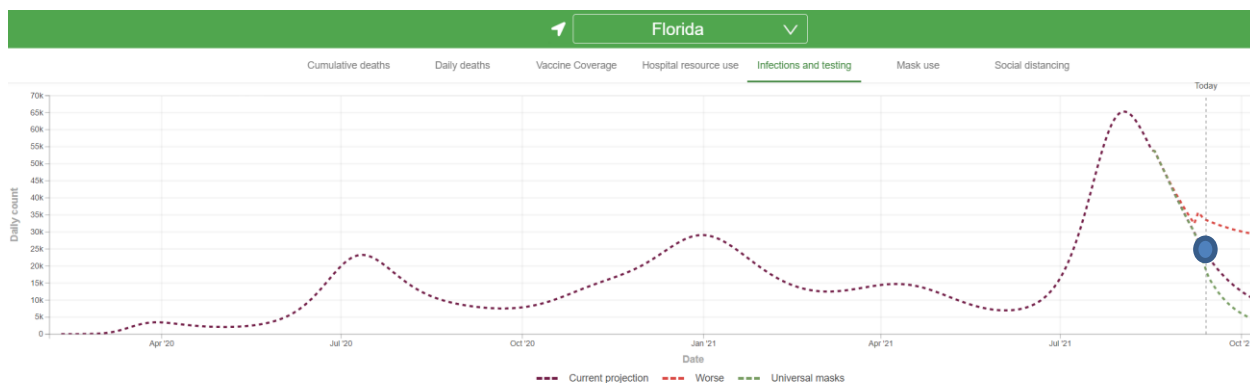
TO: Kirk Blouin, Town Manager

FROM: Darrel Donatto, Fire Rescue Chief 

SUBJECT: September 2021 Update on COVID-19 pandemic

DATE: September 13, 2021

The first wave of infection from the terrible and deadly disease known as COVID-19 began in the United States in March 2020. The second surge in infections occurred in July 2020 and was worse than the first. Then, the third wave of infections spread across the country in January 2021, again worse than the first and second waves. And despite vaccinations that began in January 2021, the fourth wave of increased infections is upon us, still worse than the prior three.



Data from: <https://covid19.healthdata.org/united-states-of-america/florida?view=infections-testing&tab=trend&test=infections>

The good news is, infection rates are declining almost as rapidly as they surged at the beginning of July. If the predictive models hold true, we should be back to infection rates and positivity rates that we were seeing in June 2021 sometime in early October.

The bad news is, the daily death rate and COVID-19 hospital bed usage remain high, with the Delta variant of COVID-19 being more virulent and more contagious than prior strains. In Palm Beach County, just 1% of all available hospital beds remain open for use and adult ICU beds are 2% over capacity, meaning there are currently no adult ICU beds available without moving someone out of the ICU.

Palm Beach County Hospital Bed Data from September 13, 2021:

Total Capacity:			
Beds	In Use	Available	Available %
2623	2599	24	1%

Adult ICU Capacity:			
Beds	In Use	Available	Available %
293	299	-6	-2%



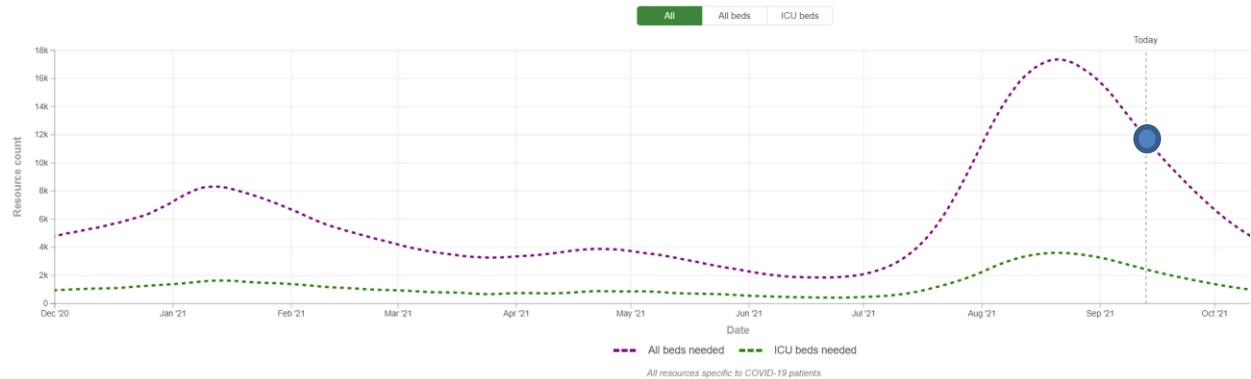
## Town of Palm Beach Fire-Rescue



### Florida Hospital Bed Data from September 13, 2021:

#### Hospital resource use [↗](#)

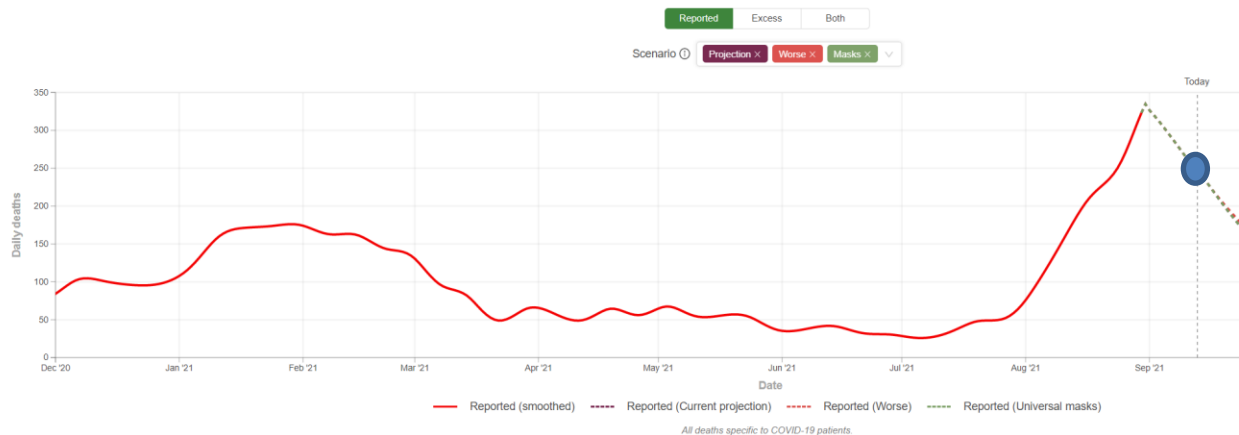
Hospital resource use indicates how equipped a location is to treat COVID-19 patients for the **Current projection** scenario. Select **All beds** or **ICU beds** for descriptions of each measure.



### Florida COVID-19 Daily Death Rate from September 13, 2021:

#### Daily deaths [↗](#)

**Daily deaths** is the best indicator of the progression of the pandemic, although there is generally a 17-21 day lag between infection and deaths.



This data suggests that the threat to those most vulnerable remains very high. The need for special precautions for that vulnerable group is as critical now as ever.

We must remember that the Delta variant is more transmissible than previous SARS-CoV-2 strains and causes more severe disease than previous strains. People infected with the Delta variant harbor about 1,000 times the number of viral particles (which experts call the "viral load") in their nasal swab compared to those infected with other strains. Moreover, the Delta variant also poses a risk to vaccinated individuals in the form of breakthrough cases, whereby vaccinated individuals may contract the disease, albeit with milder symptoms and fewer hospitalizations. However, this risk appears to be low with approximately one confirmed positive case per day among every 5,000 people who've been fully inoculated.

**The best protection against COVID-19 infection is to be vaccinated.**

However, for those who are infected by COVID-19, and those who are exposed to someone who is positive with COVID-19, the Town is offering monoclonal antibody treatment (Regeneron) to Town residents and Town employees, and their families. Monoclonal antibody therapy helps prevent severe symptoms from developing in those who are exposed or infected with COVID-19. Residents can call 561-227-7092 to set up an appointment for a Fire-Rescue crew to come to their home to administer the Regeneron therapy.

It is important to remember that monoclonal antibodies are not a replacement for vaccination. Everyone is highly encouraged to get a COVID-19 vaccine. Getting vaccinated helps stop the spread of infection. It significantly reduces hospitalizations and deaths, and it helps prevent new variants from forming.

For those who are vaccinated, the likelihood for the need for a vaccine booster appears high, with some immunocompromised people already being eligible for the third dose of a COVID-19 vaccine. However, the details surrounding when the general public will get a booster are still unknown. The need for boosters is based on research showing how the effectiveness of the vaccines can decline over time. An additional shot can provide enhanced protection against future infection. If the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine booster becomes available, and if the Town can obtain a supply of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine booster, Fire-Rescue will offer it to the community. Unfortunately, there are still too many unknowns regarding booster vaccinations right now.